

Marginal Column

Even before the Berlin conference, the thesis of extensive and radical changes in Soviet foreign policy had been largely discarded in the West and there is little left to doubt after the exchange of opinion in Berlin. But foreign policy, after all, was the field most unlikely to be affected by any important internal changes and it must be asked whether any major developments can be revealed on the Soviet domestic scene. Here, too, it would seem that the trend is one of "back to normalcy," just as it appeared to be "forward to changes" when Mr. Henry Shapir wrote his series four or five months ago. By following the new direction in perhaps the reappointment of Mr. S.D. Ignatiev who was in charge of internal security at the time of the preparation of the physicians' trial, and who was deposed after Stalin's death, when the late Lavrenti Beria returned to take over direct control over his old domain. In a sense, it was only logical that Mr. Ignatiev should make a comeback once Beria had been placed in most of the people, just as it was logical that he should be appointed party secretary of the Bashkirian Republic in Ufa, where he had begun his career some fifteen years ago.

MORE important politically than Mr. Ignatiev's appointment would seem to be the decision to send Messrs. Ponomarev and Brezhnev as first and second Party Secretaries of the Kazakh Republic, the second largest in the U.S.S.R. Ignatiev deposed the local (Kazakh) chieftains. Such actions in themselves are certainly not sensational. Everywhere in the world, persons in responsible positions are replaced from time to time, or at least should be. Such replacements on the provincial level have taken place in most of the Republics during the last year, but the Kazakh appointments contain a novel element: hitherto the first Party Secretary in all the major Republics was required to be a native citizen, thus creating the impression that the management of the affairs of the Republic was in the hands of local men (an impression which was not believed to be quite accurate by many outside observers). By delegating to Alian Ata two well-known and prominent Russian Party functionaries from Moscow, apparently for the first time, the U.S.S.R. has decided to disregard old customs and local susceptibility, a development which in a sense may be regarded only as natural and logical and may be expected to be followed in other Central Asian Republics.

MEANWHILE, preparations for elections to the Supreme Soviet are in full swing everywhere many hundreds of candidates have been announced. It would be somewhat far-fetched to regard the Supreme Soviet as the centre of political power in Russia, just as it may be precipitate to draw far-reaching conclusions from the fact that the candidates for the Supreme Soviet are to be elected by a fairly accurate picture of the social constitution of the ruling stratum in the U.S.S.R.

ABOUT six or seven per cent of the candidates are workers, while the percentage of directors of factories and leading engineers is about as large. The number of candidates has dropped considerably (they constituted 37% at the elections to the Soviet of Nationalities in 1947) and now hardly exceed three to five per cent, though the number of Kolkhoz presidents is somewhat larger than the rank and file peasants. The remaining seats are to be filled by writers, musicians, scientists and teachers who have excelled one way or another. Commenting on the changing composition of the Supreme Soviet, a writer in the (London) Political Quarterly rightly remarked that the Soviet representation is different from the one prevalent in the West and is conceived there as a reward from the State for service rendered. From this point of view, the astounding ascendancy of the group described as "intelligentsia," the bureaucracy, far exceeding its actual proportion in the population at large, should not really come as a surprise.

Jerusalem, February 21.

Italian Minister Visits Supergas

His Excellency Benvenuto Campese, minister of Commerce, the Italian Minister to Israel, visited on Thursday, February 21, 1954, the Tel Aviv shop of the recently formed Supergas Co. and the company's head office at P.E.C.'s Financial Centre.

Supergas, an enterprise approved by the Government's Investment Centre, was founded by the Palestine Economic Corporation of New York, the INCA Economic Corporation of U.S.A. and Mr. Steve Lapson, acting on his own and on behalf of a group of Italian investors.

Mr. Lapson informed the Minister that Supergas had started operations only one month ago and had already opened branches in Jerusalem and Haifa.

The Minister showed much interest and expressed his pleasure at the initiative displayed by his countrymen. He concluded his visit by seeing Dr. H. Gruenbaum and Mr. C. W. Gerstel, members of the Board of the P.E.C., with whom he had a long talk pertaining to the economic problems of Israel.

Big 3 Determined To Build Defence System

LONDON, Saturday (Reuter). — Britain, France and the U.S. today declared that they intend to develop "the system of defence on which their survival depends" following the failure of the Berlin Conference to solve the German and Austrian questions.

In a statement agreed by the three Western Foreign Ministers before they left Berlin and released simultaneously in their own capitals today, the three Ministers defended the Western security system and claimed that Soviet security proposals would involve the dissolution of "the military power of the Soviet bloc in Europe remained intact."

The statement stressed that the major problem facing the conference was that of Germany, and that the West had urged the country's reunification through free elections leading to the creation of an all-German government and a peace treaty.

Soviet rejection of the West's practical plan to this effect, the statement said, forced them to the conclusion that the Soviet Government is not now ready to permit free all-German elections or to abandon its control over Eastern Germany.

But the statement pledged that the three Western Governments "will employ their efforts to achieve German reunification in freedom and by peaceful means," adding that, in the meantime, they have suggested certain measures "which could reduce the effect of the present division of Germany and its consequences for Berlin." Specifically, it contained a pledge that the High Commissioners in Germany should study these questions with the Soviet High Commissioners.

On the Austrian question, the statement said, the agreement was blocked by the Soviet insistence on new provisions to the draft treaty after the West had accepted the Soviet version of all remaining disputed articles of the draft. The effect of the new provisions "would have been to place the Austrian Republic under an indefinite period after entry into force of the treaty and to impair Austria's right to any part in international life."

US Forces in Germany Get 6 More Atomic Cannons

FRANKFURT, Saturday (UP). — A U.S. Army spokesman said today that six more atomic cannons will be sent to Germany. The new shipment of the 60-ton 280-mm. monster guns is to arrive in West Germany.

Arrival of the 28th Field Artillery Battalion and its six atomic cannons will be a closely guarded secret. Their presence was known today through a routine story in the "Stars and Stripes," the Armed Forces official publication.

Army Turns Down McCarthy Ultimatum

WASHINGTON, Saturday (UP). — The army yesterday rejected Senator Joseph R. McCarthy's ultimatum to turn over within 24 hours the names of all persons involved in the promotion and honorable discharge of Major Irving Peress, a New York dentist whom McCarthy has called a Communist Party leader.

Navarre Admits No Indo-China Victory in Sight

SAIGON, Saturday. — General Henri Eugène Navarre, Supreme Commander in Indo-China, said today that his forces "do not expect to be able to inflict a decisive defeat on the enemy." He predicted a "dead heat with the Vietminh" at the end of the current campaign.

He stressed the seriousness of the military situation by admitting that even next year the French "do not expect to be able to inflict a decisive defeat on the enemy."

But he said that the Vietminh offensive was stalled in northern Laos and that their present force "cannot and will not be able to capture Luang Prabang," royal capital of the state.

Meanwhile, Mr. Harold Stassen, chief of the U.N. Foreign Operations Administration, who is here on a fact-finding trip, told newsmen today that "current American aid to Indo-China is not sufficient to allow Gen. Navarre to realize his plans for victory." But he said economic aid should be stepped up to particularly to assist refugees and to reconstruct war-battered areas.

Mr. Stassen is to confer with French Defence Minister René Pleven, himself investigating the situation in Indo-China. The conference is officially described as "informal," importance is attached to the fact that Mr. Stassen will visit Saigon in Paris in order to see the F.O.A. head.

Pakistan Envisions Regional Defence

KARACHI, Saturday (Reuter). — Pakistan Foreign Minister Sir Zafarullah Khan told newsmen tonight that closer collaboration between Pakistan and Turkey under the proposed pact would lead to a regional defence organization for this area.

Oil Men Say Iranian Fields in Good Order

LONDON, Saturday (UP). — An international team of experts said yesterday that their close study of Iran's vast oil fields showed that the shutdown facilities were "in good working order."

Rosenberg Children Placed in Care of Grandmother

NEW YORK, Saturday (Reuter). — Temporary custody of the two young sons of executed Atom spies Julius and Ethel Rosenberg was given today to their grandmother, Mrs. Sophie Rosenberg of New York.

Austrian Overture On Jewish Claims

VIENNA, Saturday (INA). — The Austrian Government, through mediators, has indirectly approached world Jewish organizations with proposals aimed at reopening negotiations for the settlement of Jewish claims.

Neutral Nations Split On 'Free Choice'

SEOUL, Saturday (Reuter). — The Swiss and Swedish members of the five-nation Neutral Nations' Reconciliation Commission dissented from several findings in the final report of the Commission on repatriation of Korean war prisoners published here today.

Had Opportunities

In an appendix to the report, the British and Swedish members said that "while admitting the existence in camps of strong prisoner-of-war organizations, they held the opinion that prisoners nevertheless had opportunities to apply for repatriation."

MAC Chairman's Surprising Vote

Tel Aviv, Saturday. — That the Chairman of the Israel-Jordan Mixed Armistice Commission voted with the Arabs, rejecting the Israeli complaint on the killing of a man, is not without interest.

Bus Firms Delay New Fares

Tel Aviv, Saturday. — The introduction of new bus fares, scheduled for tomorrow, has been postponed by the three bus companies which have agreed to press a demand for a further three per cent fare increase.

Libyan Army Gets First Artillery Piece

BENGHAZI, Saturday (Reuter). — The Libyan army received its first artillery piece, a 52-pound gun presented by the British army.

Over 7,000 Doctors

recognize Tugay's authority effect in cure and pain relief. TODAY, the Berlin Press-Post has published a great editorial in case of soldiers, soldiers and headshots.

UN Summons Israel, Jordan To Meeting in Jerusalem

Asks States' Views on Date

UNITED NATIONS, Saturday (UP). — Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld has formally summoned Israel and Jordan to meet with him in Jerusalem to discuss strict enforcement of the Armistice Agreement, the U.N. announced yesterday.

Iraqi Brutality Exposed at UN

UNITED NATIONS, Saturday (UP). — Israel charged today that Iraq is holding illegally three Israeli citizens in what it termed "an outrageous assault upon international and human decency."

Israel Ambassador Abba Eban, in a letter addressed to the heads of all U.N. delegations, described the circumstances which led to the arrest after their plane had been forced to land in Iraq, and Mrs. Yvonne Ben Zari, and Mrs. Minnie Barnes in Baghdad on January 3.

Mr. Eban's letter did not ask for U.N. action.

It said that the Iraqi Government had acted "with deliberate and uncivilized cruelty to the victims of an air mishap who had never intended to enter Iraq," in explaining this barbarity, the letter continued, that Government has asserted that these innocent passengers are citizens of an "enemy" country.

Trunk Road To Eilat Opened

A Jerusalem bus carrying a group of journalists was the first public vehicle to bump over the new Negev trunk road on Thursday.

Built by the Army Engineering Corps for the Ministry of Development, the highway runs from Kfar Yehonatan to Eilat, west of the old road. It passes Sde Boker and the Nabatim ruins of Abba, serving the Wadi Ramez and thence to Be'er Manaba.

The section now being completed is partly kaolin, partly asphalt, with some unsealed stretches.

The kaolin surface has weathered well, and costs a third of normal road-making, engineers from the Corps said. Beyond Sde Boker, the bus halted at "Independence Heights," 600 metres up, with a dizzy view over the Negev desert and the Wadi Ramez valley.

UJA Launches 1954 Campaign for \$120m.

MIAMI BEACH, FLORIDA, Saturday. — Moving here to launch the 1954 United Jewish Appeal campaign for \$120m. to spur plans to raise a \$75m. five-year loan to ease Israel's credit situation, UJA leaders tonight scored repeated Arab refusals to make peace as "a complete" against world peace.

Myerson Sees British Labour Minister

LONDON, Saturday (INA). — Mrs. Golda Myerson paid a courtesy visit yesterday to the British Minister of Labour, Mr. Walter Monneton.

The Shell Co. of Palestine Ltd.

takes pleasure in informing the public that as of February 18, 1954, the new telephone numbers of their Tel Aviv offices are: 67731-67732-67733











